

EI-288

HENRY (HEINRICH) BIRTH DATE: AUGUST 22, 1904

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AGE 19

PASSAGE ON "THE HANSA"

PORT OF EMBARKATION: BREMERHAVEN

RESIDENCES: GERMANY: CANNSTATT

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Oral Historian's Note: Mr. Haussler is the husband of Marie Haussler, Interview EI-289. Paul E. Sigrist, Jr., Director of the Oral History Project, 3/2/1994.

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service, and I'm here today in Largo, Florida at the home of Mr. Heinrich Haussler who came from Germany in 1923 in August, and he was about to turn nineteen when he arrived in the United States. Today is April 19th, 1993, and I just want to say I'm very happy to be here. I'm looking forward to hearing your personal account.

HAUSSLER: Thank you very much.

LEVINE: Good. Why don't we start, Mr. Haussler, by your saying your birth date and where you were born, and spell it, if you can.

HAUSSLER: I was born in Cannstatt, C-A-N-N-S-T-A-T-T. It's a suburb of Stuttgart, Germany, Württemberg. And I was born in Number 29 Hald Street in Cannstatt.

LEVINE: Heart Street?

HAUSSLER: Hald, H-A-L-D.

LEVINE: Okay. And your birth date?

HAUSSLER: 22nd of August, 1904.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, to start with, why don't you tell me the things that you remember about your early life, the things that stand out in our mind?

HAUSSLER: One of the earliest things that I remember, when my grandmother died. And only I, we had to go to the funeral, and I only must have been about three or four years old. But I remember putting a black band around my coat, and I had a kind of light brown suit on. When I put that band on, I still remember and I was wondering what it was for. I was very picky, because I didn't know what was all about it, see? That's one of the things I remember.

LEVINE: Do you remember your grandmother?

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: You said you remembered.

HAUSSLER: The only family, though. I mean, what, the main thing was she died very early. She died on an

appendix. Them days they couldn't operate on an appendix operation. So she just simply passed away. They couldn't do anything about it, see. I remember that. And . . .

LEVINE: Do you remember your grandfather?

HAUSSLER: No. I don't remember my grandfather. But I remember my grandmother, on my mother's side.

LEVINE: What was your mother's name and her maiden name?

HAUSSLER: My mother's name was, her maiden name was Amelea Hapt, Amelea Hapt. A-M-E-L-E-A, Amelea Hapt, H-P-T. And they were in business, they used to make ropes for, for the, well, for any, for shipping or anything like that, big ropes, you know. They had a great big plane where they wind those ropes, see.

LEVINE: Do you remember being there in the place where they made them?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HAUSSLER: And I remember, because my mother was born in 1870 on Christmas Day, because she was always our favorite naturally, you know, favorite in the family, too.

LEVINE: What was she like? Tell me what your mother was like.

HAUSSLER: Well, she was short and sweet.

LEVINE: Don't . . . (referring to a disturbance in the microphone made when Mr. Haussler reaches for

something)

HAUSSLER: Wait a minute.

LEVINE: After we you can show me.

HAUSSLER: I got a picture in there.

LEVINE: After we finish you can show. Well, do you remember things you did with your mother when you were a little boy?

HAUSSLER: Yeah. Well, I had, my, because all boys get in trouble. Go on vacation, I would have to have a new, I had to make a new wash line by hand, you know, you got through the thing, you make things by hand, see? That was my, I had to do so many, so many, maybe so many feet a day before I could go out and play, see. And it was once in a while, I was always interested in engines. I used to make gas engines out of coffee cans and, you know, stuff like that. One time I made, see, we had exercising place in our city for the king, for kings horses and men. They were stationed there. And then when they used to go for exercise they used to shoot just ammunition that, not really, only there was powder in there. Well, a lot of times they lost those shells, and they used to bring them up and we get the powder out. So I went to work and I made a cannon. And I closed the thing all up, see? And I put a shoestring, a shoestring up to get the thing going, you know. Good thing I was long enough away when that thing hit the powder the whole cannon blew up. (he laughs) I didn't shoot the thing, the whole thing blew up. So those are a few things, you know. And I used to, we used to live in the butcher shop. They had three big boys, and, well, of course, out there. It always was a handout. I used to go by there to give

you a piece of sausage and whatever it was, which was very attractive for a young boy, you know. Well, those three boys, they were always flying kites over the city, you know, big. One time they had a big idea. They were building an airplane, and they were going up to the hill. They needed a guy small enough to sit in there. So they offered me all kinds of sausage and all kinds of things for me to sit in an airplane. Well, I just, well, finally they, I suppose they offered me enough and I sat into it. When they push that thing off the hill, when actually it didn't, it never flew, but went over and over. And I got a few bruises out of it. (he laughs) I also got the sausage. So this is a few things, you know, that I still remember. Oh, there's a lot. I could go on and on and on, and on and on. It's just, it's just like a boy grows up.

LEVINE: Yes.

HAUSSLER: Well, it didn't, in 19-, when I got to school, when I started finishing school. Out there in Germany you had to have, they want to know what you're going to do with your life when you get to be around fourteen years old. See, they . . .

LEVINE: Who wanted to know?

HAUSSLER: Well, the state, and the, well, the school, your teacher. And then they, they want to know, "What do you want to be, what would you like to do?" Well, like my brother, he choose, he wanted to be an electrician. Well, I choose to be a toolmaker, see. And, uh, they call it in German it's Werkauckmaker. [Werkzeugmacher]

LEVINE: Do you know how to spell that?

HAUSSLER: W-E-R-K-A-U-C-K, Werkauck. M-A-K-E-R. Werkauckmaker.

LEVINE: A toolmaker.

HAUSSLER: Yeah, a toolmaker, yeah. And, which I just found out this year from a doctor that I choosed the wrong place.

LEVINE: How did you . . .

HAUSSLER: For the simple reason. In them days, when you were grinding metal or anything you didn't have no dust collectors. Your lungs were the dust collectors, and that was a sickness I just got over with now about, that's what caused it all.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Breathing in the metal.

HAUSSLER: Breathing in all that dust and things, you know. You didn't have no dust collectors. Nobody thought about that. It's just like my, like my father. He used to be an iron worker, an iron, where they, where they melt the iron. Things ought to make forms and then they put the iron in those forms and that-s what they, that's why he was sick, too.

LEVINE: What kinds of things would come out?

HAUSSLER: Well, whatever, some baker ordered a special thing in front of his over with his name on it and, you know, and everything. Just, those kinds of, anything that was made out of iron and then fancy, like a few flowers on there or anything like that. And those were big places. And when I was, to meals to my father, sometimes I got there and they just were maybe pouring iron. They

had an opening in the floor, and they were dipping out the iron with a pail and then they poured, with all that, the fumes, and all that thing. And that's what, that's what, he was sick for a long, long time, see.

LEVINE: Now, what would you do? You'd bring him his lunch? What would you, what would you have? What would you carry it in, and what kind of lunch would you bring your father?

HAUSSLER: Oh, I used to bring a regular dinner. My mother made a regular dinner. He used to have a container that held vegetables and meat. One had vegetables and maybe the other one potatoes, another one something else, and it was all in one thing, and I used to bring that down to him. And especially during, when I had vacations that was my job.

LEVINE: And then at dinner time would you all be together?

HAUSSLER: No. We, he just used to, well, he used to give me a bite and then, his brother used to work there, too. My father's brother. He used to work there. And he, we'd just sit together and, well, something good they'd give me a bite, you know. Because I had my dinner home anyway, see.

LEVINE: Now, the big meal of the day when you were little, was in the midday?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, around twelve o'clock noon. Yeah.

LEVINE: And then what about, like, supper?

HAUSSLER: Supper, well, then he came home and we had supper home.

LEVINE: Now, who would be there? Who was in your immediate family?

HAUSSLER: Oh, my father and mother and my brother.

LEVINE: Your brother. Was your brother older or younger?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, he was three years older. He was born in 1901, September 1901.

LEVINE: And what was his name?

HAUSSLER: Otto.

LEVINE: Otto. And your father's name?

HAUSSLER: Heinrich.

LEVINE: You were named after him.

HAUSSLER: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And so can you remember sitting around the table with your brother and your mother and father?

HAUSSLER: Yeah. Well, we used to, we used to, we used to get something, oh, my father used to send me to the store to get some cheese, ten cents worth of, uh, Bachsteinkase. It means something like limburger. "But don't you bring an Endstück home." That was the only, you know, no Endstück, see? [German: Stück, piece]

LEVINE: No, I'm sorry, I, no end stick?

- HAUSSLER: No end.
- LEVINE: Oh, end stick.
- HAUSSLER: Nothing on the end, see? Because the end had a crust on, you know, and when you get that cheese, there was no refrigeration in them days. They used to be under a glass cover. They actually used, sometimes, melt from the heat in the summer time, you know. It would, it was on a board, but it would melt.
- LEVINE: Can you spell the name of that cheese?
- HAUSSLER: Uh, bach. B-A-C-H-S-T-E-I-N, uh, K-A-S-E, kase. Bachsteinkase.
- LEVINE: Now, when you would go to the store, do you remember the store you went to?
- HAUSSLER: Yeah, the neighborhood store, yeah.
- LEVINE: What was that like?
- HAUSSLER: Like a little grocery store, a small grocery store where they get anything at all. (he coughs)
- LEVINE: Was it a general store? Did they have other things besides groceries?
- HAUSSLER: No, no. A grocery store was a grocery store out there. That's all it was. They didn't sell anything else besides, it's all there was.
- LEVINE: What was the town like? What, about what size? Was it a big town, or . . .

HAUSSLER: Oh, no, it wasn't, well, I would say, I couldn't say to anybody the number now, but maybe about two hundred thousand, something like that.

LEVINE: So it was pretty big. It had . . .

HAUSSLER: It was suburb of Stuttgart. Now it's all one, it wasn't even, and the Mercedes is right in between them, between Stuttgart and Cannstatt.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. What did most people do for work?

HAUSSLER: For work, well, they worked, I worked in the Fortuna, Fortuna Special, they made special machinery. That's where I worked well in my trade. And then there was, a normal company, they were next door. They made ball bearings, a ball bearing company. And then there was, uh, Bosch. Bosch, you know, that's a big place, Bosch. They made everything.

LEVINE: Oh, tools?

HAUSSLER: They made for automobiles. A lot of things for automobiles. Of course, there was Mercedes. It was Benz. Go in between and there was shoe factories, a couple of shoe factories in the thing. It was pretty busy . . .

LEVINE: A lot of industry there.

HAUSSLER: A lot of industry there. And there was also iron workers and all kinds of small shops.

LEVINE: And how about your mother? Did she work at all?

HAUSSLER: Well, she used to, she used to, she used to peddle oil and oranges and eggs, because my father was quite sick quite often, you know. And this was no use. She used to get the eggs and then, because we had, uh, we had our toilet in our own place. There was no running water or anything like, nothing in the toilet. There was no running water. We used to, because it was dark in there. When we had the candlelight in there, and I had to put the eggs. Again, you'll see if they still was clean from no, they're not fertilized, see? Because you could see it when you put it on the light. So that's was my job too. I had to do that because we didn't fill the basket up, you know, see?

LEVINE: So in other words you'd go where the toilet was where it was dark, and put it back . . .

HAUSSLER: No. That was right in our apartment there, the toilet. The other times it wasn't, but some, in our place it happened to be.

LEVINE: And then how would you find out if the egg was fertilized?

HAUSSLER: Well, you could tell. It was, there was a spot in there that would show up, see?

LEVINE: You put it in front of . . .

HAUSSLER: In front of candle light. You had a little candlelight there and you could see it right there, no problem.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, did you have other jobs that you had to do, too?

HAUSSLER: Oh, well, I had to sweep the stairway every three weeks. And, well, I had to, well, to take care

of the, the groceries, to bring the groceries home, you had to go to the store, and bring the (?) on top of that, you know. We used to get a lot of homework, schoolwork. When I mean a lot, I mean we used to get, I'll tell you something. We were very well-educated before we, when we left school. We knew about all geography, about South America, about Central America, about United States. All over the world. We used to have, geography was very important over there, geography and history. And we used to have a teacher, and he put everything on the blackboard, and we had to copy it. And copy it, and then put it in the book home. And then kind of struggle, because the next day he'll ask us about this, about this, and we had to know it.

LEVINE: What if you didn't?

HAUSSLER: Huh?

LEVINE: What if you didn't know something? What would the teacher do?

HAUSSLER: Oh, if we didn't know, you'll get, it's just, it's a bad mark for you.

LEVINE: Was he very strict, your teacher?

HAUSSLER: Well, no. You mean about hitting somebody? No, no. Except when you, if you were a troublemaker.

LEVINE: Then what?

HAUSSLER: Then you get, uh, they put your thing, your hand out, and . . . (he gestures)

LEVINE: The ruler.

HAUSSLER: The ruler. And it'll go over the tip of your fingers, see, it hurts, see?

LEVINE: So you got a very good education.

HAUSSLER: Yeah, I did.

LEVINE: Were you in the same class with girls?

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And later on, then, in the last grade we were kind of separated then, the last grade. Because we already, in the school we already had two days of what we were going to do in our life, like making drawings and making things or so, and it's taking up two days.

LEVINE: I'm sorry, you spent two days . . .

HAUSSLER: Two days we went on a different section of the school where we would do, like they gave us a model of something, whatever it was, like this here, and we had to make a drawing of this or make a drawing of this over and under. And this is, that was.

LEVINE: And this was to determine what you were going to do?

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah. I knew what else we were going to do, yeah, yeah. We made up, when we graduate we had to be pretty good at it before you graduated. Because if you didn't, you didn't make what they tell you to make, if you couldn't make that, you didn't graduate.

LEVINE: So you knew you were going to be a toolmaker.

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Before you graduated.

HAUSSLER: Yeah.

LEVINE: And then you were tested to make sure . . .

HAUSSLER: Then I, when you go to the factories, that's when you, my father had to pay ten marks a week for me to learn my trade, see.

LEVINE: And you were still in school then?

HAUSSLER: Well, (?), take one day of school and four days of, to work in the factory and learn your trade, see. Little by little, whatever they, every time you went through a certain thing for about three months you had to make a test, see. And if you couldn't pass the test you had to do that over again until you passed that test. So you, we were pretty busy with that.

LEVINE: So for three months what did, can you tell me the kinds of things you did in those times?

HAUSSLER: Yeah. We made, we made like a perfectly square, that's square all the way around. And it has a, and it, although we had to file that. When all the corners had to be standing, when you put anything across there the corners always had to be standing up because that's how good, they could tell how good you could file, because when you got a big file it's about that thing, you know. And you go over that, (he laughs) you have a controller. And that was, that was a toolmaker's trade. Nowadays it doesn't mean nothing any more. Machines can do better than I

could do nowadays.

LEVINE: So you spent three months.

HAUSSLER: Well, that little (?) is even longer than that. But you pass from one thing to the other. See?
Then you get on the machine.

LEVINE: What kinds of machiens?

HAUSSLER: You get, like go on the lathe.

LEVINE: The lathe.

HAUSSLER: The lathe, see. And then you maybe, then the next thing you go on a, what they call a shaper.
And then, and every time you get through there then you got to, you got to pass inspection, see.
And then you go to the next thing. And then the last thing, of course, is fine hand work, you
know, that you got to do.

LEVINE: So for a whole year you would be doing this?

HAUSSLER: Oh, for, doing that for four years.

LEVINE: Oh, four years, uh-huh.

HAUSSLER: Three-and-a-half years, almost four years I done that, yeah.

LEVINE: So you really knew your trade by the time you graduated.

HAUSSLER: Yeah. Well, then, always in Germany that means a lot. And then when you come with your trade where you learned your trade, you don't stay there, see. You've got to move on to learn more, so you go to a different factory. All you show them, you show them your, your reports, what you learned, and your marks that you got, and then they hire you. And there was only, they only have one job over there that I had to show that. And then, then I came to the United States. When I came to the United States and I showed them that, that didn't mean nothing. They didn't even look at that. Says you go on upstairs and see what you can do. So, and I was very disappointed. You got all your papers, you went through all this. That didn't bother them one bit. Go on upstairs and see what you can do. Well, naturally if you learn your trade, that was no problem. You just have to do what you learned, that's all. When it hits you in that minute, you know, then I go through all this here and they don't even want to know what I learned? Well, they know what I learned when I came upstairs, see? They were smart, smarter than I was (he laughs) in a way.

LEVINE: Well, now, how about your brother? What trade did he learn?

HAUSSLER: He was an electrician.

LEVINE: And he did the same kind of thing?

HAUSSLER: Well, he had to go to, because he was through wiring. In them days Germany, they just used, they had just come to the point where they used to get electric in the house. So the wires, they were, you couldn't take any wires and put them in the wall. They had to be all on the outside, see, small thin cables like not any heavier than this here. They were lead, they were lead cables,

really.

LEVINE: Lead.

HAUSSLER: Lead, yeah. Because on account of the temperatures and everything, see. And so they use, that was his job. He was an electrician for a long time. And then after he was an electrician when I arrived, my uncle came home one time when he bought a violin, and my father says, "Well, you're going to learn to play the violin." Because I was still in school, and my brother was, he was learning his trade. I was a, I learned, I went to a teacher, but I never made a violinist, you know, for a real violinist. I was what you call a dancing fiddler. But my brother, all of a sudden he started that. And he had to be an orchestra leader, but he had a different, different instruments. In the first place he learned the violin, he learned to play the flute, he learned to play the little tin boxes. He learned to play the piano. He learned to play the saxophone. He had a seven-piece orchestra.

LEVINE: In Germany?

HAUSSLER: In Germany, yeah, yeah. He was, so electrician was out for him entirely. He didn't . . .

LEVINE: Oh, he changed his career.

HAUSSLER: Oh, well, yeah. I changed, yeah. The whole thing didn't bother him any more. Yeah, he was pretty good.

LEVINE: Do you still play at all?

HAUSSLER: Not like him any more. I used to play just about, I'd say about four years ago. I had an operation on the hand there and over here.

LEVINE: Yeah.

HAUSSLER: Nothing any more.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, so, let me see. What else do you remember about, well, let's talk about the house you lived in. Do you remember that?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Can you describe it?

HAUSSLER: Yeah. It's a three-story house. We lived on the top floor, and two-bedrooms, one on each side. We lived right underneath the roof because the thing came down right over our bed, the roof came down. And we were right. And we had to heat the place with a, with coke, I mean, or coal, a little coal stove in the front room. And then, of course, we had a stove in the kitchen for cooking.

LEVINE: What kind of stove for cooking?

HAUSSLER: Coal and wood, till later on we had gas. They put gas in there, and we had two gas burners and one gas light in the kitchen.

LEVINE: So you didn't have electricity when you were there?

HAUSSLER: Not then, but later on they put electric in, see. But not when we were there.

LEVINE: Later.

HAUSSLER: A bit later.

LEVINE: And how about water?

HAUSSLER: We had water and they filled us up, and we were in, the lines down to, the owner have to come and used to get a torch, get the thing going again. Every winter that froze up. Because there was nothing, the lines were running right in the open, you know.

LEVINE: So you would have faucets?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, we had faucets, yeah, yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: And you had hot water?

HAUSSLER: No, no, no, no. You need the hot water, whatever you need. And they had, for washing you had a community wash house. I mean, like we had ours in our place. There was six families. They'd rather take their turn whenever they want to go and wash. And they had to fire up and do whatever they want to do that was, that was in, regular wash house that was.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LEVINE: So it was a wash house for this, like, apartment building?

HAUSSLER: There was, outside of, well, they had, I think they had a little horse stable next to it, and there was the washhouse that was next to that.

LEVINE: I see.

HAUSSLER: It was in the backyard.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So the women would decide who was going to go where.

HAUSSLER: The women decided when it's your turn.

LEVINE: Do you remember any foods that your mother cooked that you liked when you lived with your mother?

HAUSSLER: Well, of course, you know, it's, she was a very good cook, and, yeah, we had a, we probably got a, maybe a pound of meat between the four of us. There wasn't that much around. And then during the war it really was real bad, you know. We, she used to, my mother used to stand there and cry because she took a loaf of bread, it was made out of potato flour. And she, the roll was maybe about eight inches in diameter, and she cut it in four pieces. And then when she cut it, the dough was all just soggy like. Potato flours don't really rise enough. And that was real bad. Of course, we didn't, that was really towards the end of the war when, then our biggest relief was when the, when the Americans come in on the, they delivered flours to the bakers when they couldn't charge the high prices either, and they could make white bread and rye bread, and that was the biggest thing that ever happened to us.

LEVINE: Can you remember anything else about the war years?

HAUSSLER: About the war?

LEVINE: The war, yeah.

HAUSSLER: Well, we all belonged, we were brought up Catholic, and I belonged to a club, like when you learn a trade you belong to a certain club, and then when you're all done with it then you belong to the same people, they graduate into a bigger, to an older class, see. They called them Lehrlingsverein [Lehrling, apprentice] and Gesellenverein, [Geselle, journeyman] see. [Verein, club]

LEVINE: Could you spell that?

HAUSSLER: Uh, L-E-H, (he pauses) L-E-R-N-G, frein is F, not, V-A-R-E-I-N.

LEVINE: Now that's when you were new . . .

HAUSSLER: This was run by the from the church. And then Gesellenverein was that old one, then. This is spelled G-E-S-S-E-L-E-N, F, uh, V-E-R-A-I-N. And that's the old one. The reason I mention this is because the, the priests had to come to our place. My father happened to be home. My father was very well-educated. He was reading all the time books and whatever it was. And he came to our place and they wanted to know why Otto don't come to the Gesellenverein. And my father says, "He's too busy. He's got his music. He's working all week long, only he usually gets, he was playing in different restaurants with four other fellows, and he was making a little money, you know. And he says he hasn't got time to go to the club, you know. And then they start talking about the law and I happened to be there. And they says, my father told the priest,

and he says, "You know it will take the Americans to finish the war. They'll take care of it. The Germans haven't got enough brains to finish this." That's actually what he told him, "to finish the war." And the answer, "Herr Haussler," that's what he called him, "the Americans, they can't come over here. They won't, they'll never, the submarines are going to take care of all the enemy troops comes over here." He told the priest, "You know," he says, "there could be a lot of Catholics on that ship, too." And the guy never said anything. He said very much. He, and he says, "If this is the way you figure," he says, "then you never, I'm telling you the truth right now, that's the way it's going to end." Well, it did end this way. So those are a few, you know, you go through. Oh, then during the war you, I had to go in what they call Hamstern [barter goods for food], to get food from the farmers. You take a train ticket and you go where the farms are. You carry a couple of cans in the bag for your, where probably you put some milk in and a few pounds of cherries or whatever they had, or a couple of loaves of bread, and you go there for the farmers. You already got your, maybe a few eggs. And then we used to get back to the place, our trade was maybe the, the guy was standing there, the police was standing there to take all that stuff away from us. So then we had to walk another ten miles to another station to take the train. So, because they took everything, they would take everything away from us. We down there maybe once every two weeks. My brother couldn't go because he was working. He had a job. I was still in school. So . . .

LEVINE: And was your father able to work at that time?

HAUSSLER: No. No, he was . . .

LEVINE: No. So it was you and it was your brother who was really bringing home . . .

HAUSSLER: And then my mother, she would peddle the eggs and oil. And the way she peddled the oil from the stuff that we call dope nowadays. You know, the flowers from, they got those circular, not sunflower seeds.

LEVINE: Morning glories?

HAUSSLER: Morning, yeah.

LEVINE: Morning glories. [actually sunflowers cm]]

HAUSSLER: Yeah, right. And they used to have big fields of that. That's what they used for oil, to make oil out of it, see. And my mother used to peddle that oil, and then . . .

LEVINE: What was that oil used for?

HAUSSLER: For cooking, salad. It was special because the stores didn't sell it because it was too expensive. My mother had a can that had maybe, I would say about three gallons. Then she sell a pint at a time, whatever she was going. It was very well to do people. Then they buy a few oranges and a few, maybe some eggs. And, well, anything to, till we got (?). Anything to make a living, you know.

LEVINE: Now, did your mother make the oil, or she bought the oil?

HAUSSLER: Oh, no. She bought the oil. She bought the oil.

LEVINE: So you would go out on a train to these farms and get something?

HAUSSLER: No. I, this was my job. She went out maybe for the first time to tell me about how to, what to do. But then after I had to do it all by myself.

LEVINE: So you would go get the things that your mother would sell?

HAUSSLER: No, no, no.

LEVINE: No. You would get things for your own home.

HAUSSLER: It just was our own, yeah. Anything, a few eggs and whatever we could get. This is, well, it was, well, hard times, I tell you. When they came, when we got the white bread and we got all this, this was the Marshall Plan, at that time.

LEVINE: Marshall?

HAUSSLER: Marshall, yeah. And Hoover ordered that.

LEVINE: The Marshall Plan, uh-huh.

HAUSSLER: The Marshall Plan. And there was, we thought when they're going to have that we wouldn't be able to get it anyway, it was too high-priced. But the Americans put the foot down, you can't charge any kind or you get this as cheap as possible. They set the price for them. But they, we can't afford it then.

LEVINE: Because before that everything was . . .

HAUSSLER: Sky-high, see? Everything, they want a profit. There was something hard to get like eggs or

anything like this, we couldn't, that's why we would get the eggs from the farm, because we couldn't afford it in the store.

LEVINE: I see. Well, before the war, was your family pretty comfortable as far as . . .

HAUSSLER: Yeah, I think so, yeah, I think so. Yeah, I think so.

LEVINE: Being able to afford what you need.

HAUSSLER: My father had a, he was a, well, he had a good job. I think, it must have paid well, but it was unhealthy, see?

LEVINE: And then when did times start getting rough for you, for your family?

HAUSSLER: Well, when, that was when the war started, 1914. I was ten years old, and the war started in August 1914. I remember my mother working for, she was cleaning up in a place where they were, they were all, what do you call them, architects, where they built bridges and big buildings and stuff like that. There was a big office building there. And my mother used to take care, clean the office every, every night we went there. And I used to help her. And that, then I used to, because they had all the typewriters there, and I used to try the typewriters out, too. I don't know if I don't any damage or not, and I wouldn't know. But, uh, . . .

LEVINE: That was when the war started.

HAUSSLER: That's when the war started, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So you were ten years old, and when the war got over then can you remember the

actual day when the Americans came in and . . .

HAUSSLER: Uh, let's see now. I don't quite, I know there was quite a big commotion, because they had, some of the, some of the soldiers said they want to give up. You know, they, and they, we didn't want to go out of it, we didn't want to go any place near public buildings, you know, like on a, on a place like, a big square where people usually go and assemble. We didn't want to, and my mother said, "Don't you go anywhere near there." Because there used to be a lot of problems until they got things straightened out, see. Because some of them didn't want to quit, see?

LEVINE: Were you fearful at different times?

HAUSSLER: Well, yeah, we were. We were fearful. We, you know, we didn't know what was going to happen until everything got, it took a while to get things straightened out, see?

LEVINE: Were there Jewish people in your town that you knew?

HAUSSLER: No, well, yeah. Well, but this is the World War One. World War Two was different. World War One they didn't do anything about the Jewish people, no. And, but then, of course, there was, the inflation came after that, and that was bad, too, you know. I remember when they used to, they put, maybe they put some bills out that would have cost five thousand marks, right? Well, before they could, when they just, on the press, before they got through with the press that was already obsolete, and they put the cost twenty-five thousand marks right out of it instead of five thousand. Because, and that just probably would buy a loaf of bread. You know? And I was afraid that some of them days that we would go through the same thing here if they keep that up the way they're going.

LEVINE: How long did that go on?

HAUSSLER: Oh, that went up there, that went, you know, it started, it started really bad when I left home. Because my uncle was over there in 1922, and he already had his hundred mark shines, his hundred mark bills in a suitcase, about, oh, maybe four, five hundred of them in a suitcase. That's how it started, really. But then when I came, when I left over there, when I got to Hamburg I had to have twenty-five dollars. I had to show when I came this country here that I had twenty-five dollars. Then my uncle sent me twenty dollars spending money.

LEVINE: When you were here.

HAUSSLER: No. When I, when I was over there he sent me twenty dollars extra.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

HAUSSLER: And when I was living in Hamburg, oh, that came a long, long ways, I could, I remember actually I could buy a bottle of champagne for a dime. That's how bad the inflation started then. Because I was so surprised when I came to, when I came to the bank to cash a few of my dollar bills I got, for one dollar I don't know how much money I got just for one dollar. So that's when it started. But then when we left for America then a glass of beer was ten cents on the boat, you know. That's, the refreshment business was all over with.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, just getting back to, was there prejudice when you were living in Germany between the Jews and the Gentiles?

HAUSSLER: No, there was no problem. We, in fact, I had a fellow, a friend of mine, he lived in the back of the house, the back building. They were Jewish people, and they were awful good to me, and we were good friends, and he learned to be a doctor. When my mother was here in 19, they let her come over here in 1937, because I told my mother, (?) says, "Why don't you go and see your mother once?" "All right." I says, "Make arrangements somewhere if that's what you want me to do." So I tried to make arrangements. She told me, "Don't you ever come to Germany. Not the way you write about Hitler, you never, no, don't you ever do that." So I said, "Why don't you come over here?" So she did. She came over here in 1937.

LEVINE: Well, let's talk about when you came over. How was it decided that you would come?

HAUSSLER: Well, my uncle was over there in 1922. I had a good job, but inflation was, it was not that bad for, your money wasn't worth anything really. And my uncle says, "You, any time you like to make up your mind you want to come over you just let me know." And he owned a hotel here, a restaurant and a hotel here. They were pretty well off, and he said, "Any time you want to come." So finally I decided, I wrote him a letter, and he says, "Okay." So he sent me the money to come over, over to the United States, see.

LEVINE: So you came by yourself.

HAUSSLER: Yeah.

LEVINE: And do you remember what you brought with you?

HAUSSLER: Oh, I had a brand new suit. A friend of mine, my friend's father was a tailor, and he made me a

nice, very modern suit where the things, the coat will button in the center there, you know, real modern, yeah.

LEVINE: What was it made out of?

HAUSSLER: Oh, nice, it was brown with sprinkles in it. A nice suit, really, a real nice suit. When I had, with my, I got three days vacation I had coming. So I took one week's wages, three days' vacation. I could buy myself a pair of Mercedes shoes.

LEVINE: Oh, what were they like?

HAUSSLER: They were shiny leather, like, you know. And they were Mercedes shoes. They were well-known over there, the shoes. The shoe factory was right in our city, see. But it took one week's wages and three days of vacation. That's . . .

LEVINE: So did you take anything with you?

HAUSSLER: Well, I had those, I had the, not too much. I had some stuff that my mother made, you know. I had a couple of shirts. She was very handy in sewing. And we used to have shirts where we could change our sleeves. We'd button up in here. When that got dirty on here we could go, you know, get them washed and put another set on.

LEVINE: How did you, how did you attach . . .

HAUSSLER: With buttons.

LEVINE: With buttons all the way up the arm?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, yeah. And over there we, we were always with cufflinks on there, you know. We were always, yeah. So . . .

LEVINE: Well, how did your mother feel about your going?

HAUSSLER: Well, she didn't, my father was in the hospital. He was there over twelve years. And, of course, my brother, he was home. There was one good thing, he was home here. And he says, "Well, if it's the best thing you can do," he says, "you can find something for yourself here." So . . .

LEVINE: So do you remember leaving?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, I remember. Yeah, I remember. I remember very well leaving. (he laughs) I, the day before I left I got a call from the Hamburg American Line that my uncle left twenty dollars. But that was in Stuttgart, and I was in Cannstatt. So I had to, we went to the train station in Cannstatt, and I, it was fully closed to, closing time at night. And when I get up, when we get up to Stuttgart, Stuttgart was, the train station was, the train would go in and this was the end of the line, see? And so they had to, to do that they had to go kind of slow, so it took them forever to get to the end. So I couldn't wait that long, so I jumped the train before that, and a guy got me just like this, right in the, a guy with a red cap on, you know. And I told him, I says, "I haven't got no time." I says, "I got to . . ." So I had to give him my name and my address, and since they're going to, "You hear about me later." So I went up to the Hamburg American Line and I got my twenty dollars. I just got there on time. Because I was leaving the next day, early in the morning. And then when I was here I got a telegram, like that I had to go in front of a, in court, in front of a, the court down, up in Stuttgart, for violating section so-and-so and whatever it was.

And I said, "Well," I said, "I'm sorry." I said, "You want to pay my fare, I'll be over there." I says, "You don't want to pay my fare, forget it."

LEVINE: (she laughs) Your mother sent you the telegram. Is that how . . .

HAUSSLER: No, they came direct, she had to give the address, see. She wanted to know, they sent to my home. I didn't give the address from here. So they sent it to my mother, and I gave them this address. And then this, she told him that I wasn't here any more, told them they wanted the address from here. So I didn't, unless there was some kind of fine I was supposed to pay, I never paid. I never bothered with it.

LEVINE: Okay. So how did you get to Bremen when you left?

HAUSSLER: Huh?

LEVINE: How did you get to Bremen, where you took the ship from?

HAUSSLER: Oh, we took, the ship, the Hansa. We came on the Hansa.

LEVINE: H . . .

HAUSSLER: It's supposed, H-A-N-S-A. It's supposed to be, that used to be the fastest ship it was built, no matter, there was no waves going, whoa, up and down and up and down. And they're supposed to leave from Hamburg. But they had a strike in Hamburg. The folks, the ones they got to take care of the ship. So they put the ship close by to Bremen, and then we were shipped out of Bremen instead of Hamburg, see. We came out of there instead of Hamburg.

LEVINE: So you knew beforehand that you had to go to Bremen?

HAUSSLER: Yeah.

LEVINE: Oh, and then we didn't, we only know, we had to go to the Auswanderer Halle. It is H-A-S-W-A-N-D-E-R, H-A-L-L-E. Haswander Halle [Auswandererhalle]. That's where you meet Polish people, you meet German people, you meet Italian people. They had a ticket to go to America. And there they could see that you were clean.

LEVINE: They examined you?

HAUSSLER: Yes. Huh?

LEVINE: They examined you?

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah, that you were clean with, well, any kind of, especially the women with lice, you know. Over there it's a big disease. Everybody, all the women especially. Because they never had the real stuff to wash their hair or anything like that in them days. So they had to be, they had to be cleaned up first before they let them go out. And you had a, they give you an examination to see if you were, if you were all right.

LEVINE: Was it a thorough examination?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, they really, because you had to have that right when you got here, see.

LEVINE: You were examined in Hamburg?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, we were examined in Hamburg. That's where the place was. And then we were, we had to go to, by a small boat we had to go to Bremen where we were put on a big boat.

LEVINE: I see.

HAUSSLER: There were eight in one cabin.

LEVINE: So who did you share the cabin with?

HAUSSLER: I don't know, with a lot of people. I won't even know some of their names. There was a washroom, the washroom was on the outside of the cabin. There was more than one. You just had to wait in line till you get in there. Then they had upper and lower, because I had to be up on the upper because I was late, see. I was up in the upper. I was (?), in a way.

LEVINE: So how was the voyage?

HAUSSLER: Well, we were three days late on account of the storm. I tell you, one time we went, you meet a lot of nice people there. In fact, I meet, I met one friend there, of course, he's dead now. You know, you eat together. What I'm (?) dining room with about three, four long tables in the dining room, and you just, and then they had a shelf you put up, see, in the dining room. And then you, when you get your meal, you get your fork and things with it, because you couldn't leave it there because the ship would always go. So I got, I remember that day we had sauerkraut and hot dogs, and so I put my sauerkraut on, and I waited for the other fellow to come close to me, and I put it there. Too bad, it was, zhht. It was down, way the way down on the other table on the other end. (he laughs)

LEVINE: It slid down because of the waves?

HAUSSLER: So naturally we were a little careful after that. But you got another dish and all that.

LEVINE: So you had like the little shelf under the table?

HAUSSLER: No. That's a little thing came up on the side of the table that, so the plate wouldn't go directly . . .

LEVINE: Oh, I see, like . . .

HAUSSLER: A little edge there, see?

LEVINE: I see. Uh-huh. Like an edging around.

HAUSSLER: Yeah, an edging around the table.

LEVINE: To hold it on.

HAUSSLER: When, in fact, it was the last trip that Hansa made. I don't know if they ever passengers back because the things that used to hold the up and down thing on the outside where you, where the deck was, they were all, everything was loose out there, so they didn't want to, I don't think that they made another voyage with that ship.

LEVINE: Well, were you afraid during the voyage that the ship would break?

HAUSSLER: One time we were, when they closed the whole thing all up so we couldn't, you couldn't, you were, and they told us, "Stay close to the lifejackets." They closed the whole ship all up, and

then because we was all right afterwards. We never only, maybe for about one night, and then that cleared up the next day. But I never, we, our cabin was somewhere, was in the middle of the ship. I didn't know how important it was at that time. See, we never got that, two were in front, oh, it was bad. Oh, it was bad. But we were right in the middle of it, so it wasn't, we never felt that bad about it.

LEVINE: Was there anything else that happened on, on the voyage, that you recall? Anything particular?

HAUSSLER: Well, I met that friend of mine which I, I didn't see, he went to Rochester, New York. I went to Utica, see. And then I, I got a job in Utica, and then I got poison ivy one time, and my uncles came when I went down to the railroad station in Utica, and I saw some papers. And I saw all the money they were paying in some other cities, like Syracuse, Rochester and all, almost twice as much as I was getting. And I thought to myself, "What in the world am I doing down here?" So I made up my mind I'm going to move.

LEVINE: Okay. Let's pause right here because I want to change the tape.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine and this is Tape Two of my interview with Heinrich Haussler here in Florida on April 19, 1993. So let's continue. You said what are you doing making so little when you . . .

HAUSSLER: Yeah. Well, I made, I figured, when I read those papers I figured I was way underpaid for what

I was doing. And my cousin used to be foreman in that place by the fire. My cousin came over in 1914. He escaped the war over there in 1914. He came over in 1914.

LEVINE: So he was, he was managing . . .

HAUSSLER: He was my foreman when I was here. He got me the job over here. And then I told my, I called my cousin about it and he says, "You know," he says, "I showed them the papers." He says, "Well, maybe they give you more money if you ask them." So I told him about it. He says, "No." He says, "No, no." He says, in them days I was getting fifty-seven cents an hour. That's supposed to be top when you work fifty-six hours a week straight time, see. So I, when you worked days, in the busy time you worked seven days a week. We used to work seven days a week. So naturally we always liked to work on a Saturday and Sunday because that was the overtime then. So if you didn't work Saturdays and Sundays we didn't get no overtime. So I thought, so my cousin, he says, you know, I says, "You know," he says, "I think I'll, I like, I like to really move." "So why don't you ask him for more money?" He says, "Well, I did." So he, I was told, he says, "Well, no we, well," he says, "I'm leaving." "What you mean you're leaving?" "Well, I am leaving." He says, "I'm going to go somewhere else." I didn't tell him where I wanted to go. I know where I wanted to go. I wanted to go to Rochester for the simple reason because Marie moved to Rochester. (he laughs) And before that . . .

LEVINE: You had met Marie?

HAUSSLER: I met Marie in Utica, see. And she moved to Rochester. And all I can (?). I used to work on an old motorcycle in her uncle's garage, and put that together. And the next day I saw quite a bit of

her, see, at that time. Then she moved to Rochester, and her parents moved to Rochester, and so when I saw that piece in the paper about all the difference in the money, so I thought, "Well, I'll move. I'm going to move to Rochester." So those days, I says, "Well," he says, "I, we can't give you any more money." I says, "I'm leaving." "Oh, you're not going to leave, are you?" I says, "Oh, yeah, I'm leaving." So it used to be they used to give you five cents an hour more. "But," I says, "that's not the point. I'm not, I'm not staying on account of five cents." So then I came to the, I was going to leave two days from then. Then I got in between and they told me then there was something unusual. They would give me fifteen cents an hour more. "Well, I'm sorry, but I'm not staying." My cousin got kind of upset about it, see. I says, "I'm not staying, not for fifteen cents more. No," I says, "I can get that . . ." To my cousin, I says, "I can get eighty-five cents to start to a place that I got." I had Ritter Dental figured out, Ritter Dental in Rochester. That's where I wanted to go.

LEVINE: That's the name of the company?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, Ritter Dental. They make little, like the chairs you sit in and, oh, everything a dentist used in them days.

LEVINE: Say the name of it again, Riddle?

HAUSSLER: Ritter. R-I-T-T-E-R. Ritter Dental Company in Rochester. Yeah, so, and anyway, my cousin was kind of upset, but I left. And there was another fellow I was staying with. He was a carpenter, and he figured that he was underpaid too, so he left, too. So he . . .

LEVINE: You had moved out of your uncle's house?

HAUSSLER: No, I lived in the, yeah. I lived there, and I moved out of my uncle's house and moved to Rochester, see.

LEVINE: But you, when you were still in Utica, were you, you had moved away from your uncle's house?

HAUSSLER: Yeah. We moved away from there, see. And then I stayed in some friends, well, I knew him pretty well. His name was Utz. Well, anyway, I moved out, and then I came back, I came over here to Rochester, and I put my, my tool box, which was heavy, you know, you got all, and I put it in a station in Rochester, in one of those lockers. And then next, and then Monday I was on Sunday. Then on Monday I went on and inquired for the job, went to Ritter Dental by, well, with streetcar, see? And then I went, I went to Ritter Dental and then I didn't know at first, they usually hired, they used to hire people through an agency, see. But I went direct to the employment manager which they, they usually don't do. But then I told him, I told him my story, and he, he was kind of interested that I just, you know, came over from Germany and learned my trade over there. So he called that woman up that's supposed to pay, the agency. And the way it looked to me, that everything is supposed to go through that agency, see. But he says, his name was McGee, so he hired me. And I stayed there, well, till 19, that was in 1926, and then I stayed there until about 1930. And when the, I never, I never was laid off in a job as long as I worked any place. When 1930 they closed the place up, Ritter Dental. I had my tools in there. They didn't (?). They said, "We are just waiting to open up the place again, see?" So my tools were there. Well, in the meantime I, when I was, I built a house in Rochester before we got married. I built a house before we got married. Well, and of course, I had a mortgage on the house. And then when they closed Ritter Dental up my cousin said, "Well, we stick together,

you know." We, and two of them, a friend of mine, Jimmy Ames and (?), they found, Corona Typewriter, they were tuning up for the new model, which year that was, it must have been in 1930, and they connected with Remington. Well, they got this place in, out in the country someplace that, where they made, produced the Corona typewriter. Uh, Troten, T-R-O-T-E-N. Troten, New York. And then they got the job down there. He says, "Why don't you come on down?" So I went down there and we got a, instead of getting laid off I went to work and got my tools, which I had an awful time getting it because the place was closed up. And I worked there, and I only had one job I was doing there. We worked sixty hours a week. When I made the thing to make the skirter on the typewriter. That was my, I made the tool and die, punch and die for that. Which was very close because if one section would get damaged all they would have to do, put another section in, and they had to be all lined up. And then, so this was my only job I had down there. Would we, all summer long we had a good job down there, the three of us. It shows you what a nice place that was, where we worked. The mailman and the ice man, whoever it was, they didn't want you to do, your neighbors felt insulted if you would lock your door. The mailman come in, he laid the piece of mail on the table, and the milk man would put the milk in the refrigerator, and that's the way those people lived down there. It was nice.

LEVINE: Wonderful.

HAUSSLER: Honestly, yeah. It was really, it was an experience.

LEVINE: Yeah. Tell me, how, what made you decide to build your house, to build a house?

HAUSSLER: Well, I'll tell you, rent was awful high around 1928, '29. I got married in '29 and when we had a,

I bought a lot in 1928 and I was thinking about that, we were looking around. Rent was awful high, like I remember something like a regular apartment three hundred dollars a month. Them days that was awful high. And (?). So I, my brother-in-law, he knew some builder that was building houses, Lee Flanz. In fact, he's a millionaire today and he's still, we still get together every time we ever come up there. He built my house way back in, only he built it himself. He was working on that. And so when I got all through the banks wouldn't give me any mortgage. They weren't giving any mortgage out any more. So I had to get, a regular mortgage in the bank was four-and-a-half percent. So I had to get a private mortgage from a doctor for six percent. So that cost me ninety dollars every, three thousand dollar mortgage, ninety dollars every six months, I had to have ninety dollars, see. So when I, when I all of a sudden, when that happened there in Ritter Dental there, you know, what am I going to do? But then I got a job in Troten. When we closed our place up, we stayed down there.

LEVINE: Did you look up your wife as soon as you got to Rochester?

HAUSSLER: Oh, sure, yeah. We, she moved down with us.

LEVINE: Well, I mean, when you moved from Utica.

HAUSSLER: Yeah? Oh, yeah. That's the first stop I made. I stayed with her parents overnight till I found a place. I stayed there quite a while anyway. We had, there was a few things to fix around there, so I'm handy in fixing things, so, yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember what it was about your wife that you liked so much?

HAUSSLER: Well, she was awful cute. She was a good dancer. And she had, well, I'll never forget when we, before we got married, she had long hair, way down, oh, way down. And she used to roll it up. I got that, I bought a car, and I always says, "I won't buy an automobile till I got twice as money in the bank as the car will cost." So the car cost six hundred and thirty dollars, and I had thirteen hundred dollars in the bank, and I got a 1929 sports coupe with a rumble seat, see? (he laughs)

And that was a big deal. One time I went to Utica to see my aunt, and we went over the railroad station. She had a railroad, when I had to stop, well, just before the railroad, the darn thing came down and I had to stop the brakes kind of quick, and her hair came all down. (Dr. Levine laughs) She had it all rolled up, you know. Well, that was a little embarrassing. But after that she wasn't doing, after that she cut it because she thought it was too much of a nuisance. But, and then when we got, when we got married I had a house built, and it was on August the ninth when we got, yeah. We moved in, in 1930, 1929, 1929, August the ninth we moved into the house. And we, she says, oh, Lee Flanz, and my brother-in-law and his sister, she lives in Cleveland now. We went out together for a little dinner, you know. In them days they didn't believe in big weddings, you know. So, anyway, on our honeymoon we went down to the, to Utica. And I didn't tell my aunt nothing before that I was going to get married, so we came down to Utica and says, "Well," we says, "you could live up, you can go up to the camp." And she says, "I got, well, one of them got to sleep down on the couch, the other one can go up to bed." My wife says, "We only share one bedroom." She says, "What?" She says, "You're not going to bed . . ." She says, "I'm married. We got married." "You did not." She says, "Oh, yes. We got married." (he laughs) So she couldn't believe it, you know. But I always, I was, I tell you, sometimes, being independent is not always the best thing.

LEVINE: Why do you say that?

HAUSSLER: Because my, when, during the Depression my uncle came up there twice to find out and see if I'm getting along all right. He says, he told me, he says, "Look," he says, "I'd rather take that mortgage. I know you're paying more on it than you're supposed to pay." "No," I said, "that's okay. Everything is all right." It was the wrong thing to do because my aunt, right after that, she died, and my uncle says, "Well, I'm going to change everything to, all to her, all." I was his wife's real nephew, see. I was the real, he was the second husband, see. So he says, "I'm going to change everything so you and Bill," that was the other one that used to be the foreman, he says, "it's all taking care of." But I never got, he died a week later. And he was going to, now, see, it isn't that, that's what he wanted it anyway in the first place. Now, if I would have accepted that before that, but too independent. It's just, well, maybe, I don't know, I still think I made out all right.

LEVINE: Yeah, yeah. Well, do you think you keep any of the customs of Germany since you've been here in America? Are there any ways that you have that you've kept up that are . . .

HAUSSLER: Not really. I don't know. Except I couldn't, we couldn't live like some of the people do here. I mean, well, you know how they live nowadays. We just couldn't do that. Now we've been here sixty-three years. We have our ups and downs and, but you've got to straighten those things out. You've got to give a little, you take a little, give a little, and that's all I can tell you. But I don't know anything, it was, one thing is, I mean, I got a credit card, but I never pay one dime interest, not a dime. I keep it for convenience. If I, when I go out and buy something that costs maybe a hundred dollars or two hundred dollars or whatever it is, I don't have to carry that money with

me. But I have my checkbook, always, with me. Then at the end of the month you try to balance your checkbook and it never comes out right, so you don't write that many checks. You only write one. So the check maybe goes out to eight, nine hundred dollars, whatever it is, so we only write one check. So I got a checking account for smaller things, you know. I would never believe in, uh . . .

LEVINE: Credit.

HAUSSLER: The borrowing money, credit. That's the wrong thing to do, and that's what's wrong right at the present time. That's why we don't get no interest on our money, because the banks borrowed too much money to people that don't pay back, and we're holding the bag. But they never say anything about that. That's really our main, look at the shopping centers they built, and most of them are empty, and the people got their money stuck into it. It's the bank's fault. When I had to pay that mortgage, I had to pay on time. I not just had to pay the interest, I had to pay the insurance, the fire insurance and, the fire insurance and the house insurance. I had to pay all that.

LEVINE: Yeah, yeah. Well, when you look back on your life, when you look back on the fact that you came here from Germany and started a new life here, how do you think about it? What does it mean to you?

HAUSSLER: Oh, it was the best thing that ever happened to me, honestly. The best thing that ever happened. Because my brother, he was over there, and he ended up miserable. My mother did, I had to let her go. She, I wanted her to stay in 19, she went back in 1938.

LEVINE: She came over in 1938.

HAUSSLER: She, seven. And she stayed an extra few months. She came over for six months, and she stayed a little longer. And, uh . . .

LEVINE: You sent for her? You sent for her?

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah. I sent for her, yeah.

LEVINE: And was your father alive then?

HAUSSLER: Oh, no. He was dead. He died. And, but she, she doesn't quite work. This was, the language and she thought she misses all her friends over in Germany. But she ended up terrible over there. They took the place away from, the Nazis. They put a, one guy that was in the Air Force, they put in her place, and she had to go in an old age home.

LEVINE: Why didn't your brother want to come over?

HAUSSLER: Well, he had his business. He said, he was the orchestra leader. He didn't want to leave Mother alone. He didn't want to leave Mother. You know, she would have been all alone then. So he didn't want to do that. So it's just one of those things.

LEVINE: Well, let's see. Is there anything else, how about learning the language?

HAUSSLER: Oh, I was going to show you. (he looks through some papers) We both graduated, see? We went to school.

LEVINE: Oh, to evening school.

HAUSSLER: Yeah.

LEVINE: In Rochester.

HAUSSLER: It was very, very good them days. Now, I'm not kidding you. We started out, we started out, what's this? What's this? Handkerchief, right? And then we used to write that, write down whatever she says. Schooling was excellent. I'm telling you, it was first class. It took us no time at all that we could get along.

LEVINE: How long did it take you to certify?

HAUSSLER: It was through the winter. About five, six months and we got the diploma, yeah.

LEVINE: Good.

HAUSSLER: Her father even, father and mother, they went to school. Her mother didn't, but her father did, and he was over seventy years old when he graduated yet from this, because they had a way of doing it. This is . . .

LEVINE: Well, now, is there anything else, was there, when you first came to this country were there some things that struck you as very different about this country? Can you remember?

HAUSSLER: Well, the different things, because you had everything so plentiful. Like my aunt, she had this hotel, and they were, she had a dining room, about seventy people. You could, they could eat all they want in the dining room for fifty cents. And in the, in the bar room, out in the bar room

they were serving plates for twenty-five cents, and that had everything in it including pie and coffee and whatever, stew and bread and everything, twenty-five cents. And my, in the dining room everything was so, so plentiful there that I couldn't, when I came, that first morning my cousin, he went, he came home from college. He's, he graduated, he was a chemical engineer from Troy Polytechnic, down there in Troy.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, New York.

HAUSSLER: And he was, he used to come, and he, when they was here they, I couldn't understand how they could do all those things here. It was just remarkable how they, how kids, they could live like that. We lived, according to them we lived very poor, but we lived clean. That's (?), we lived clean. But we didn't have that. My mother used to, I find, when we used to get, we had, like sometimes in the evening we had just maybe bread and some, a little sausage. Well, they used to cut up the bread in all little, then put a little sausage in each thing, and this way we, so none of us would get, just have too much or not enough. Put it, this is the way we had to divide things up. For milk you had to go across the street, and of that we'd had enough. Not during the war, they took the milk away from me when I was ten years old when I needed the most, I couldn't get any more milk. So this is things that I was really, when I had, the only thing that maybe I was disappointed, my first job I had, I learned a trade over there and things were not so good when I came over in 1923. I think it was Harding and it was Harding, and Coolidge was running for vice-president against Wilson, I guess. And everybody was out of work. So I worked for, I finally got a job in the, I worked for Close, a good friend of my uncle, and I got seven dollars a week. I worked every day, and I got my meals there, but I had to pay eight dollars a week, both.

So I owed my uncle, they owned the hotels, I owed (?). Well, that's okay. So when I worked there three weeks, and then I got a job in the cutlery when I got fifteen dollars a week.

LEVINE: In the cutlery?

HAUSSLER: In the cutlery I got fifteen dollars a week matching, matching knives, because they had those plates in between. I had to grind them and, you know, match them. And then I give my aunt the extra three dollars. And I was, at that time it was kind of funny, you know, that she would take since she told me this, "Heinrich, I just want to tell, give you a lesson. You don't find no money on the street in this country. You've got to earn it." Now, when Christmas came along she made a thousand times more than what I did now, you know what I mean. (he is moved)

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So she was teaching you the lessons, and she was good to you. Yeah.

HAUSSLER: It was good. Let's face it, I mean, nothing wrong with that. And my cousin, he married a teacher. He was a good job. When he had his first job, he, when he graduated, because they all looking for those, in them days you're not even, you got about ten jobs waiting for you if you want to interview for chemical engineer, you know. They were really looking for those people. When he got a job in Lockport, it's near Buffalo, an asphalt plant. He had a job. Now, every time he went to Utica he used to come to my place when he stayed, he used to sleep in the evening, and when he'd come to my place he used to sleep there for four or five hours, and then he'd pick us up, we'd go down to Utica, we'd go together. And when we left Utica, he used to drove during the night because there wasn't that much traffic on the road. And then he'd stay in our place for the rest of the night, and then in the morning he'd go back. So that's, I mean,

everything happened for the best.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE TWOo

LEVINE: Well, how do you like this phase of your life, the sort of "old-age" phase?

HAUSSLER: Well, it's, you got to, you've got to just make the best of it. You can't, you can't, you know when some people they, I like to be independent. Like you take this fellow that was here there before? You know, they don't really, when I get washed up in the morning, they like to help you. Well, I'm not helpless, and I mean, and I'm not that, we're both, we're not that type of people. We just don't, and they don't quite sometimes like it when we do that. But he says, "I got to put something down on my paper." "Well, you can cut my nails or do something like that." (they laugh) I don't care what you put down.

LEVINE: Do you find, do you think about your earlier life a lot now?

HAUSSLER: You mean . . .

LEVINE: Do you remember more about your earlier life, or do you think about it?

HAUSSLER: Well, I'll tell you this. It's so full of, I could, I could talk for hours. I mean, you know, you're, when you figure seventy years, it's a long, long time. And when you, we used to make, we used to do our homework with a kerosene lamp, and that's all there was. There was nothing, on top of that when I look back now, at that time I probably figured that's, what we were learning there, I thought maybe that was unnecessary. How should I, how would I know about South America

like Chile, or how would that look? Well, we had to know that, we had to draw that. We had to draw the mountains and we had to do, I mean, but, you see how good that was for your education? Nowadays, for God's sake, they can't even read and write. This is a shame! I mean, they got to do something. Something got to be, I don't know why they let them get away with that.

LEVINE: Yeah. Well, what are you most proud of, or what are you most grateful for in your life?

HAUSSLER: Grateful that I had guts enough to leave Germany. Because you're all by yourself, you've got to, when you're eighteen years old, you know. But something that helps you, even at them days, you were kind of independent. You had to know how to help yourself. You had to, you couldn't depend on everybody. You couldn't. You just had to learn to do things for yourself. And I think that helped a lot, when we came over here. Oh, then on top of that I was a ham actor.

LEVINE: Oh, really!

HAUSSLER: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I was, yeah. We belong to, when I was, I sang in a quartet. And we'd go, we used to sing, there was four of us. We used to go around in small towns around Utica for our free dinner and then we used to sing on the bar.

LEVINE: Did you sing in German?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Could you, can you remember something? Could you sing a little, just a little something?

HAUSSLER: Oh, dear. One of the few songs that we had, I remember, I don't know if I can sing.

LEVINE: Just try. Sing what you can.

HAUSSLER: (he sings in German) “Ich lag am Waldessaume in einer schönen Sommernacht.” I can't remember it, but this is the kind of thing we used to sing, the four of us. And we had a Model T Ford, see. And then on Saturdays, we belonged to what they call The Singing Society, see. And we were all, in them days we were all young people, and then we created that Maennerchor Club [Men's Choir Club]. They had a complete stage, but it was all run down. The wall seams and the, whatever they had for the rooms, it was all. So we rebuilt the whole thing, and then we went on someplace. Like the Prince of Heidelberg. I remember it was a doctor, Doctor and Prince of Heidelberg. I always played things that, the characters, like, you know. Because I couldn't play the Prince of Heidelberg. We had a nice guy, a Julius Metzger with curly hair. He was the prince, right? But we all had to have a job, right?

LEVINE: So were these in German, these plays?

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah. They were in German, yeah. Maennerchor, we were so good that the Avon in Utica was a movie, it was a movie theater, and we had to put it on for them, that's how good that was. We had, all the musicians, they were all mostly Germans. It took quite an orchestra to put that thing on. And we put on one play every month. But we were, every other month we had to be in one of them. And then in the meantime we just had to help out and small things, see. So I'll never forget the name Olga, she was supposed to bring in a telegram, and then it was all in the play, you know. And then I'm supposed to, when she came in I have to offer her a glass of wine,

see. But it's not supposed to be wine. We're supposed to bottle the, you know, colored water, whatever it was. But I, smart Alec me, you know, I had to put, she had actually wine. Because I figured Olga, she would like to drink wine. So she, but she didn't expect that, see. But that was a wonderful thing, because when she did taste the wine she kind of (he demonstrates) and that, that made the people laugh. So on top of that I done something good, you know. She expected water. (they laugh) I put wine in there. I'll never forget that. You know, those things you don't, you never forget. It was really something.

LEVINE: Well, you have quite a life. We're running out of time. Is there anything that you would like to say before we close?

HAUSSLER: Well, I just say I'm tickled to death that we are here and spend the rest of our life here, and make the best of it. We never, I never knew that, you know, that when these, those people come to help me, because I was quite sick. And I never knew that Medicare would care that much. Honestly, I never thought they would. This is all done by Medicare. They take care of it, they, and I get, I know how to take care of myself so my feet don't swell up any more. It's all through those people there. I never, I never thought, if you get a check coming, Medicare pays. That's not all they do.

LEVINE: They do a lot.

HAUSSLER: They do a lot of things, I'm telling you, believe you me. They're all trained people. Well, look at the fellow that was here. There's another one coming, a nurse coming, and she, so, honestly I never knew, because I was in the hospital twelve days, and I never knew that they would, I didn't

expect anything like that.

LEVINE: Well, it's nice to have . . .

HAUSSLER: And they insist on it. They make sure that Marie is well taken care of, and that we can, that we're living, you know, that we can make a life for our own.

LEVINE: Wonderful.

HAUSSLER: And keep on, instead of just wasting away. That's what they're afraid of, you know. Of course, you know, there's a lot of people in, when I was in the hospital there's one woman came in, she says, "Are you, you got anybody home when you get home, anybody waiting for you?" I says, "Yeah. I got my, the wife and my daughter, they're home." They says, "Are they here today?" He says, "Are they going to come to see you?" I says, "Yeah, they'll be here at two o'clock." "Well," he says, "I'll see you right after that." Well, she never came. She didn't have good intention. All she did was looking for somebody that would be alone after they get home. Well, those people here don't let them get away with anything like this. And, of course, I told them that she never showed up anyway, but this just shows you what happened. But those people there, that's all done by Medicare. I didn't even know that.

LEVINE: Well, that's another subject altogether.

HAUSSLER: They help you an awful lot.

LEVINE: Yeah, good. Okay. Well, I want to thank you very much. It's been wonderful . . .

HAUSSLER: You're welcome.

LEVINE: . . . talking with you. And I want to say that it's April 19, 1993, and I've been here with Heinrich Haussler in his home in Largo, Florida and this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service and I'm signing off. (break in tape) Okay, this is kind of a postscript because we were just talking about Ellis Island.

HAUSSLER: Right.

LEVINE: And I wanted to ask you, well, when you arrived in the New York Harbor, what did you see there?

HAUSSLER: What I saw there? We got there on a Friday night and we saw all the commotion going across, all those ferries with automobiles and things going across the river down there with, you know, that's the way they used to come across from down there, they . . .

LEVINE: From Battery Park?

HAUSSLER: They put their cars right on. That was one thing that I couldn't quite get. All the cars, barge after barge they went across. In them days they didn't have no Holland Tunnel, you know. And so everything came across there. And we used to watch that for ages. Well, then the thing was, Friday we came, in the afternoon, and they only unloaded the First Class passengers. We were in the tourist class, so we had to stay there till Monday morning, see?

LEVINE: On the ship.

HAUSSLER: On the ship. So we were all, naturally it was a beautiful weather. We had this big commotion there. I says, "I don't know, can I ever live through anything like that? Am I some day going to drive a car like this (he laughs) to get across there?" We just couldn't quite get that. Well, then the next day they took us, they came and we got off the boat and we got on a small boat and we got to Ellis Island. On Ellis Island I saw all those cages around there. I said, well, one said it was Germany. So we . . .

LEVINE: Most of the cages had a sign?

HAUSSLER: Yeah, we had that, where, Poland, Italy and whatever, Greeks, whatever they were. And we got, you get in there, right? And then you, one by one they would, the first thing was they had your medical record from, that was already from the Auswandererhalle in Hamburg, see. And they looked that over and then they wanted to see the money that we got, the twenty-five dollars. And a few other movalities, whatever they had. And then we, we got out of the thing, and then we were separated. Wherever we had to go, some went to Chicago, some went to, they put us in a certain place and then they put us into a, to a place where the train would leave for Utica, see. They put us on a little boat. And then we got off the boat when we got into the railroad station. What station that was I couldn't tell you any more, I wouldn't know about that. But we weren't in there in about an hour and a fellow came along. He wanted to know, in German, if we were, he says, "Are you hungry"? So he says, "Yeah, a little." So he gave me a pail when I give him a dollar, and that was a dollar. My dollar left. (he laughs) So I thought, "Why spend my money this way? I'm not going to get very far." So we had to wait until, until, that was in the morning. We had to wait till the evening before the train, before we got actually on the train. But they

were very nice on a train because we slept. It was all night long we had to travel on the train, and they, they give us a, the porter give us a pillow to sleep on. "You don't have to worry about it." You know, he told us in German. He could talk German. "When the time comes, Utica is here, I'll tell you." So we just keep on, he's sound asleep. So we were sound asleep, I was sound asleep and all of a sudden it was daylight, about seven in the morning. And I had to get ready to get off to, I had a ticket on there, see. Where I was going, my name, my address. It's all taken care of. And then I got, when he says, "They telephoned your relatives. Somebody probably be here." And so I got, I got off the train, and then my cousin, he was home from college for vacation that time. And he came with a Dodge touring car, a 1922 Dodge touring car. It's a first, it's the first trip I had in an automobile. I never had a trip in an automobile before. Well, he had a, when his father was out in Germany. He bought him a push horn that had two buttons on. See, he was kind of proud of that. (Dr. Levine laughs) And he, we, he took me home then. And then he give me really another, I mean, they were so nice to us. That's what . . .

LEVINE: What happened when you got there?

HAUSSLER: When I got there I was hungry because we didn't get, so my aunt made a couple of eggs for me. She says they disappeared so fast it wasn't even funny. (he laughs) And she says, "Would you like two more?" I says, "Yeah, I wouldn't mind." And they disappeared, too. (he laughs) And she said, "You wouldn't want another two?" "Well, uh . . ." "If you want, I'll make you another two. I can tell you didn't get nothing all day." I said, "No, we didn't. We didn't have anything." But then I should have ate something else besides eggs, so the next two she made some fried potatoes with it. (Dr. Levine laughs) In the morning, eight o'clock, you know. Because they

eat fried potatoes anyway in the morning, you know, in a hotel like that, see. And they always were nice to me. And I stayed there with my aunt, you know. And then i was surprised how they, how she used to buy things, you know, a big farmer would come and sell her the beef, whatever they needed. Big hind ends of some steer. Another farmer would come maybe a couple of hundred eggs or whatever she gets. Another one would come and bring the vegetables, you know, and things like that. And my aunt, we had a big pantry. This was all, and the farmers used to come and deliver. That was, I don't know, something new to me. (he laughs) I never saw anything like it in my life.

LEVINE: Wow. So she was buying for the hotel.

HAUSSLER: Oh, after about, well, she had a big business there. She was a good cook. Only the hotel was located between two factories, a cutlery and the Bossert Corporation.

LEVINE: Bosil?

HAUSSLER: Bossert. B-O-S-S-E-R-T Corporation. That's where I worked, my first, my first job as a toolmaker then. And so when my aunt, she had a wonderful business. She was a good cook. She made like sauerbraten and stuff like that. The people liked that. And naturally there were some people, they come in, they, all they can eat, one put a spoon in the bag of potatoes. "Anybody else wants any potatoes?" (he laughs) He put it all in his one plate and handed it in, the dish. I mean, all things come to memory, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Yeah. Were there a lot of Germans in Utica?

HAUSSLER: Oh, yeah, oh, yeah. A lot of German people in there. Especially from Solingen where they make the knives in the thing. My uncle came from Solingen. He worked in a, in a knife factory over there in Solingen.

LEVINE: In Germany.

HAUSSLER: Yeah.

LEVINE: S-O-L . . .

HAUSSLER: Solingen, S-O-L-I-N-G-E-N.

LEVINE: Yeah. Were there other ethnic groups besides Germans in Utica?

HAUSSLER: Well, Polish.

LEVINE: Polish.

HAUSSLER: A lot of Polish people.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HAUSSLER: And they had a lot, of course, them days, they, the thing, the cotton, the thing that made all the linens and stuff like this, they kind of moved out of, they moved on south further. They moved out of Utica, see. One time there was a lot of people out f work in Utica, because a lot of Polish people, the Italian people, they worked in what they called it . . .

LEVINE: Uh, well, the garment factory?

HAUSSLER: Yeah. They make the, they make the yarn.

LEVINE: Oh, a mill?

HAUSSLER: Mill, yeah, the cotton, the mills, yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, I think that we'll stop here now, and this time we're really signing off. And I've been talking with Heinrich Haussler, and this is Janet Levine signing off.